THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

PRESS RELEASE

May 28, 1985

LEONA E. PRASSE, CONNOISSEUR AND CURATOR
May 28 - August 25, 1985

As a curator in the Department of Prints and Drawings at The Cleveland Museum of Art for forty-two years (1925-1967), the late Leona E. Prasse guided the Museum in acquiring the finest possible prints and drawings. She was also one of the most important donors to the department, giving between 1930 and 1981 nearly five hundred works from her own collection. A selection of more than one hundred of her most important gifts, prints and drawings dating from the 16th to the 20th centuries, will be on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art through August 25, 1985. The exhibition honors the memory of Miss Prasse, who died December 23, 1984.

Miss Prasse, who began forming a collection soon after she came to the Museum, made her donations to the Museum in the name of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Prasse. Seeking prints and drawings of exceptional quality, she kept the Museum's needs in mind, selecting works that would add to or strengthen the Museum's collections.

Among the notable works in this exhibition are a group of old master drawings, including the most distinguished Spanish drawing in the Museum, a study by Bartolomé Estéban Murillo for a painting of the Virgin and Child (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art). A group of drawings by the 20th-century American artist Charles Burchfield was purchased from an exhibition, the first ever devoted to Burchfield's drawings, organized by Miss Prasse in 1953.

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The exceedingly varied nature of Miss Prasse's collection is illustrated by the range of prints in the exhibition. There are outstanding prints by old masters, such as Dürer and Rembrandt, engravings after Pieter Bruegel I, engravings by William Blake for his Book of Job, prints by American artists Maurice Prendergast and John Sloan, and 20th-century European works, including a group by Wassily Kandinsky. Miss Prasse's particular fondness for 19th-century French artists is reflected in the many fine prints by Delacroix, Gericault, Daumier, Renoir, and Toulouse-Lautrec. A selection of woodcuts by Lyonel Feininger recalls Miss Prasse's friendship with the German-American artist and the definitive catalogue of his graphic work which she published to critical acclaim in 1972.

Louise S. Richards, chief curator of prints and drawings at the Museum, organized the exhibition, which is installed in the Museum's prints and drawings galleries.

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For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Information Department, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.